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# NEWS Release

For Immediate Release

**Topic:** State's First Trauma Center Designations  
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## **State's First Trauma Center Designations Announced Today**

History was made today in Mississippi as State Health Officer Ed Thompson, M.D., M.P.H., and Gov. Ronnie Musgrove announced the first hospitals to receive a Trauma Center designation from the Mississippi State Department of Health since the 1998 passage of House Bill 966, the Mississippi Trauma Care System Law.

Dr. Thompson approved one hospital with a Level I Trauma Center designation and the remaining hospitals with the Level II Trauma Center designation by the Mississippi State Department of Health, Trauma Care System. These designations take effect today and follow recommendations by a survey team of health professionals and are based on standardized established criteria for trauma centers.

Involvement by hospitals in the Trauma Care System is on a voluntary basis. As part of the statewide network of trauma care centers, these hospitals may accept, stabilize and care for trauma patients with significant injuries. The new designation helps the hospitals join an emerging statewide trauma network, established to help identify and better utilize trauma services that take advantage of the patient's "Golden Hour."

Under Mississippi law, hospital emergency departments can seek designation as a Level I, II, III or IV Trauma center, with Level I requiring the most resources. The designations set specific criteria and standards of care that guide hospital and emergency personnel in determining the level of care a trauma victim needs and whether that hospital can care for the patient or whether they should be transferred to a trauma center that can administer more definitive care. State surveyors inspected each hospital to critique the type of care delivered to trauma patients, how that care is delivered and what the hospital could do to improve its delivery.

University Medical Center in Jackson, Mississippi received a Level I designation. To qualify as a Level I trauma center, facilities must have a full range of trauma capabilities, including an emergency department, a full-service surgical suite, intensive care unit, and diagnostic imaging. Level I centers must have a residency program, ongoing research, and provide 24-hour trauma service in their facility. These hospitals provide a variety of other services to comprehensively care for both trauma patients, as well as medical patients.

Hospitals receiving a Level II designation include: Baptist Memorial Golden Triangle Hospital, Columbus, MS; Delta Medical Center, Greenville, MS; Forrest General Hospital, Hattiesburg, MS; North Mississippi Medical Center, Tupelo, MS; and Singing Rivers Hospital, Pascagoula, MS.

To be considered a Level II trauma center, facilities must be able to provide initial care to the severely injured patient. These facilities must have a full range of trauma capabilities, including an emergency department, a full service surgical suite, intensive care unit, and diagnostic imaging. For specialty care a patient may be transferred to a Level I trauma center.

*Trauma – Add 1*

Dr. Thompson said, “Trauma is known as the neglected disease. It is a major public health problem in Mississippi claiming more than 2,000 people and disabling nearly 6,000 each year. That results in more than 50,000 years of potential life lost in our state alone. Our goal is to be sure that everyone in Mississippi has an organized system of trauma care that offers them excellent patient care and the best possible recovery.”

He added, “These hospitals receiving a designation today and their medical staffs have shown a true commitment to provide the level of care to trauma patients that they would desire for their own family, 24-hours per day, 365 days per year, to all patients, without exception.”

“So many Mississippian lives will be improved because of the designation of trauma care centers across the state,” said Governor Ronnie Musgrove. “The role that these centers will have in our state is important as we further develop top rated healthcare options for the people of Mississippi.”

The Mississippi State Department of Health’s Division of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) worked on the development of the statewide trauma care system. They also provided technical assistance to hospitals as they went through the process of developing a trauma center. Wade N. Spruill, Jr., Director of the Division of EMS, said, “This Trauma System is an excellent mechanism that we can use to deliver an appropriate patient to the most appropriate facility in the appropriate amount of time to receive appropriate treatment.”

Areas evaluated as part of the process included:

- Administration
- Clinical Laboratory
- Emergency Department
- Patient transfer agreements with other hospitals
- Pre-hospital services
- Quality improvement programs
- Radiology
- Surgery services
- Anesthesiology
- Critical Care Units

In addition to the medical services provided, trauma centers must also exhibit a commitment to community outreach. According to Dr. Thompson, these hospitals have provided outreach services in the past and will continue to provide similar injury prevention community programs in the future.

Briggs Hopson, M.D., Medical Director for the EMS program, said, “The two most important parts of trauma care is prevention and rehabilitation. These trauma centers not only contribute trauma care for the entire community, they provide important prevention and rehabilitation information. This year is the right time for furthering our discussions about trauma, for educating the community on trauma prevention, for evaluating our trauma centers, and for comparing Mississippi trauma cases with other trauma cases nationwide.”

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